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AUTHOR Fishman, Joshua A.
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ABSTRACT

Discussed are some of the problems of bilingual programs (lack of funds, personnel, and evaluated programs). Four broad categories of bilingual programs are (1) Transitional Bilingualism, in which Spanish is used in the early grades to help pupils "adjust to school" and/or "master subject matter" until their skill in English is developed; (2) Monoliterate Bilingualism, which aims to develop both languages for aural-oral skills, but is not concerned with literacy skills in the mother tongue; (3) Partial Bilingualism, which seeks fluency and literacy in both languages, but generally restricts literacy in the mother tongue to subjects related to the ethnic group and its heritage; and (4) Full Bilingualism, which aims to develop all skills in both languages in all domains. (The author feels that a fully balanced bilingual speech community may be a theoretical impossibility.) Vitally needed are (1) a survey establishing language and varieties employed by both parents and children, by societal domain of function; (2) a rough estimate of the relative performance level in each language, by societal domain; (3) an indication of community and school staff attitudes toward the existing languages and varieties and toward their present allocation to domains; and (4) an indication of community and school staff attitudes toward changing the existing language situation. (AMM)

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BILINGUAL EDUCATION
in
SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE *

Joshua A. Fishman
Ferkauf Graduate School
Yeshiva University

ED 040404

Bilingual education in the United States currently suffers from three serious lacks: a lack of funds (Title VII is pitifully starved), a lack of personnel (there is almost no optimally trained personnel in this field), and lack of evaluated programs (curricula, material, methods). However, all in all, I am not discouraged. We live in an age of miracles. If we have reached the stage where even Teachers of English as a Second Language are becoming genuinely interested in bilingual education then, truly, the remaining hurdles should soon fall away and the millennium arrive in our own days.

As public educational agencies finally begin to develop programs in bilingual education for the "other-than-English speaking" communities in the United States, those who are committed to the notion that cultural diversity is a natural and valuable asset to this country (and the world) might be expected to simply set up a cheer of approval and to urge that we get on with this shamefully delayed task without further delay. Though I number myself among those who value the maintenance and development of cultural and linguistic diversity in the United States, it is not entirely clear to me that <u>that</u> is what most of the existing and proposed bilingual education programs have as their goal. Further, even those programs that do explicitly state goals of language and culture

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* These comments prepared for the 1970 meeting of TESOL (March 20-29, San Francisco, California), are based upon ideas developed together with Mr. John Lovas, graduate student in my summer 1969 seminar on Societal Bilingualism (Linguistics 3o8S) at Stanford University.

maintenance often seem to overlook an important dimension in conceptualizing their efforts, an oversight which could seriously limit the success of these bilingual programs per se.

Needed: Realistic Societal Information for Realistic Educational Goals

Since most existing bilingual education programs in the United States provide only educational, psychological or linguistic rationales for their efforts the insights into societal bilingualism recently advanced by sociolinguists have not yet been incorporated into their designs. Thus, many programs are attempting language shift or language maintenance with little or no conscious awareness of the complexity of such an effort when viewed from a societal perspective.

Let me try to be more explicit about the kinds of difficulties that may develop for bilingual education programs if school planners are not aware of the language situations in the communities to which these programs are directed:

1. The school may attempt a program aimed at language maintenance (e.g. developing high performance in all skill areas of mother tongue and second language and promoting use of both languages in all major societal domains) in a community actually in the process of language shift. Thus, the school's efforts could be cancelled out because it did not take account of community values or preferences.

2. Conversely, the school may attempt a program aimed at language shift (e.g. developing competence in the second language only and extending its use to all major domains) for a community determined to maintain its own language in many (or all) societal domains. Again, the school could fail (or achieve very limited success) because it ignored the sociolinguistic dimension of the problem.

3. Even if the school program and community objectives are fortu-

itously congruent, the school program may not take account of important characteristics of the speech community, e.g.,

a. the existence of one or more non-standard varieties (in one or more languages) whose school appropriateness must be ascertained from the speech community itself.

b. differential use of these varieties by members of the speech community from one domain to another and from one network to another.

Schools often adopt simplistic notions, e.g., that there is only one kind of Spanish and one kind of English and that everyone everywhere uses this "one kind." Such notions are obviously untrue.

Four Broad Categories of Bilingual Education Programs

It may be instructive to propose a tentative typology of bilingual education programs based on differing kinds of community and school objectives. Each of these types will be briefly illustrated by an existing or proposed bilingual education program for some Spanish-speaking community. In presenting this typology of bilingual education programs, I would like to clearly distinguish between them and "English as Second Language" programs. The latter are programs which include no instruction in the student's mother tongue as part of the program. Andersson (1968) makes this point quite clear:

> Bilingual education in a Spanish-speaking area may be defined quite simply as that form of schooling which uses both Spanish and English as media of Instruction. Bilingual Schooling has often been confused with the teaching of English as a second language (ESL).

Another point about this typology is that it is not based on student and schedule characteristics such as proportion of students speaking a certain language and proportion of time devoted to each language (Gaarder, 1967; Michel, 1967; Andersson, 1968). Rather it looks to the kinds of sociolinguistic development implied in the program objectives

and suggests that various kinds of programs assume and lead to particular societal functional conditions on the part of the languages taught.

Type I. Transitional Bilingualism. In such a program Spanish is used in the early grades to the extent necessary to allow pupils to "adjust to school" and/or to "master subject matter" until their skill in English is developed to the point that it alone can be used as the medium of instruction. Such programs do not strive toward goals of fluency and literacy in both languages with opportunity throughout the curriculum for the continued improved mastery of each. Rather, they state goals such as "increasing overall achievement of Spanish-speaking students by using both Spanish and English as media of instruction in the primary grades." Such programs (consciously or unconsciously) correspond to a societal objective of language shift and give no consideration to long range institutional development and support of the mother tongue. An example of such a program can be found in the grant proposal of the Los Cruces (N.M.) School District No. 2 for support of their "Sustained Primary Program for Bilingual Students." Perhaps the best way to characterize this program would be to cite the three primary objectives against which the program is to be evaluated:

1. To increase the achievement level of Spanish-speaking youngsters through the use of a sustained K-3 program.

2. To determine whether Spanish-speaking youngsters achieve more in a program that utilizes instruction in both Spanish and English or in a program that is taught in Spanish only.

3. To involve the parents of the Spanish-speaking students in the educational program as advisors and learners, thus enriching the home environment of the child.

The entire proposal makes no mention of measuring performance in Spanish, or continuing Spanish in the curriculum past grade 3, or of making any survey of the language situation in the community. * Such programs are

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* Other transitional programs, as mentioned by John and Horner (1970), are the Follow-Through Project at Corpus Christi, Texas, and the

basically interested only in transitional bilingualism, i.e., in arriving at the stage of English monolingual educational normality just as soon as is feasible without injuring the pupil or arousing the community.

Type II. Monoliterate Bilingualism. Programs of this type indicate goals of development in both languages for aural-oral skills, but do not concern themselves with literacy skills in the mother tongue. Thus, such programs emphasize developing fluency in Spanish as a link between home and school, with the school providing recognition and support for the language in the domains of home and neighborhood; but it does not concern itself with the development of literacy skills in the non-English mother tongue which would increase the formal domains in which the child could use the language. This type of program is intermediate in orientation between language shift and language maintenance. The likely societal effect of such a program might be one of language maintenance in the short run, but given exposure of the students to American urban society, it might well lead to shift. One example of such a program can be found in Christine McDonald's proposal for the El Rancho Unified School District in Pico Rivera, California. The program is designed for pre-school children and their parents, and would focus on language, particularly reading readiness activities. The proposal envisions a teacher fluent in Spanish and acceptance of the parents' and children's home language. However, the focus of the program would be on ultimately developing literacy in English with no reference to similar development in Spanish. Bilingual programs for American Indians frequently fall into this category, because, in many instances, there is no body of written literature for the child to learn in his mother tongue. Obviously the intellectual imbalance between English literacy and mother tongue illiteracy poses a difficult situation for any maintenance-oriented community, particularly if it is exposed to occupational mobility through English.

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various informal programs for Puerto Rican students in New York City and elsewhere which depend on the use of "community aides" in the classroom.

Type III. Partial Bilingualism. This kind of program seeks fluency and literacy in both languages, but literacy in the mother tongue is restricted to certain subject matter, most generally that related to the ethnic group and its cultural heritage. In such a program, reading and writing skills in the mother tongue are commonly developed in relation to the social sciences, literature and the arts, but not in science and mathematics.* This kind of program is clearly one of language maintenance coupled with a certain effort at culture maintenance (perhaps even cultural development, should the program result in the production of poetry and other literary art forms). In general, the program in the Dade County (Fla.) Public Schools (as described in its administrative guide lines and also in Rojas, 1966) exemplifies this type of bilingual education. The program provides special instruction in English in all skills for all Spanish-speaking students who need it. Additionally, the program provides formal instruction in reading and writing Spanish with emphasis on Spanish literature and civilization as subject matter. Other areas of the curriculum do not utilize Spanish as a medium of instruction. Other programs of this type are conducted by numerous American ethnic groups in their own supplementary or parochial schools (Fishman 1966). Such programs imply that while the non-English mother tongues are serious vehicles of modern literate thought, they are not related to control of the technological and economic spheres. The latter are considered to be the preserve of the majority whose language must be mastered if these spheres are to be entered. Nationalist protest movements since the mid-19th century have consistently rejected any such limiting implication.**

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* The Rough Rock Demonstration School (Navajo) initially tended to follow a program of this kind (John and Horner 1970).

** Mackey (1969) refers to such limited bilingual programs as being of the "Dual-Medium Differential Maintenance" Type.

Type IV. Full Bilingualism. In this kind of program, students are to develop all skills in both languages in all domains. Typically, both languages are used as media of instruction for all subjects (except in teaching the languages themselves). Clearly this program is directed at language maintenance and development of the minority language. From the viewpoint of much of the linguistically and psychologically oriented literature, this is the ideal type of program, as illustrated by these comments:

> Since one of our purposes is as nearly as possible to form and educate balanced, coordinate bilinguals -- children capable of thinking and feeling in either of two languages independently -- instruction should, we believe, be given in both languages... (Michel, 1967)

> An education, both-in and out of school, which respects these basic principles [to gain "progressive control of both languages" and "a sympathetic understanding of both cultures"] should hopefully produce after us a generation of bilinguals who really are fully bilingual as well as bicultural (Andersson, 1967)

Programs such as these enable us to examine the difference between developing balanced competency in individuals and producing a balanced bilingual society. Though bilingual societies might find individuals with highly developed competency in all skills and domains very useful in a variety of interlocutor roles (teachers, translators, business representatives), a fully balanced bilingual speech community seems to be a theoretical impossibility. Thus, this type of program does not seem to have a fully articulated goal with respect to societal reality.

Several examples of this type of program exist, but all of them are small pilot or experimental programs. The Coral Way Elementary School (Dade Co., Fla.) and the Laredo Unified Consolidated Independent School District (Texas) are two frequently cited instances which exemplify this kind of program (Gaarder, 1967; Michel, 1967; Andersson, 1968). In the Coral Way School, students receive instruction in all subjects in both languages, English in the morning from one teacher, Spanish in the afternoon from another teacher. At Laredo Unified,

students receive all instruction from the same teacher who uses English half the day and Spanish the other half. The evidence so far suggests that these programs are quite successful, but looking at them from the view of the functional needs of the community, there is serious question whether they should serve as ideal models for large-scale programs. As social policy they may well be self-defeating in that they require and often lead to significant social separation for their maintenance rather than merely for their origin.*

Needed: Societal Information in Establishing a Bilingual Education

Various types of bilingual education programs make implicit assumptions about the kind of language situation that exists in a given community and about the kind of language situation that ought to exist in that community. Program developers should make their assumptions explicit and attempt to test the validity of these assumptions by gathering various kinds of data regarding the societal functions of community languages and existing attitudes toward them, both before and during the development of bilingual education programs.

Gaarder (1967) suggests that the way in which a school or community goes about establishing a bilingual program will largely define the structure the program will take. That assumption underlies the suggestions here for gathering information beyond that normally available in school records and county census data as part of the processs of deciding whether to establish a bilingual program and what kind of program to establish, if the first decision is affirmative. In this early stage of development the following information seems minimal, if the school and community are going to make conscious, explicit decisions about an appropriate bilingual program:

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* Mackey (1969) has dubbed such programs as being: "Dual-Medium Equal Maintenance" in type. The Rough Rock Demonstration School currently tends in this direction.

1. A survey that would establish the languages and varieties employed by both parents and children, by societal domain or function.

2. Some rough estimate of the relative performance level in each language, by societal domain.

3. Some indication of community (and school staff) attitudes toward the existing languages and varieties and toward their present allocation to domains.

4. Some indication of community (and school staff) attitudes toward changing the existing language situation.*

This information would allow citizens, board members, administrators, and teachers to decide which type of program (or combination of program types) would be most appropriate to the community, both in terms of the existing language situation and in terms of the direction and extent of change in that situation.

Once a decision to develop a program is made, more detailed information would be required, particularly for determining the materials and methods most appropriate to achieving the program's objectives. Such information might include the following:

1. A contrastive analysis of the major languages and/or varieties used in the community and any languages or varieties being introduced in the school.

2. An analysis of the phonological, grammatical and lexical variables that most clearly distinguish varieties.

3. More detailed measures of student performance by language and domain.

Data of this sort would allow curriculum specialists and in-service

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* For an introduction to domain-related applied sociolinguistic description see Fishman, Cooper and Ma (1968b). For the theory underlying such description see Fishman, 1967.

training instructors to choose and/or develop instructional materials and methods appropriate to the students in the community, ideally avoiding the traps of (a) teaching them what they already know or (b) teaching them what they don't want at the expense of developing greater skill in the domains which the community recognizes and wants developed.

Conclusions

After a hiatus of more than half a century (Fishman 1968a) we are just now re-entering the first stages of genuine bilingual education at public expense. We are just overcoming the deceptive and self-deluding view that teaching English as a second language is, in itself, all there is to bilingual education. We are just beginning to seriously ponder different curricular models of real bilingual education. This paper stresses that such models have societal implications, make societal assumptions and require societal data for their implementation and evaluation.

We are just beginning to realize that public schools should belong to parents, to pupils, to communities. We are just beginning to suspect that these may be legitimately interested in more than learning English and affording better and bigger TV sets. We may soon arrive at the disturbing conclusion that it is not necessarily treasonous for pupils, teachers, parents and principals to speak to each other in languages other than English, even when they <u>are</u> in school, even when they <u>know</u> English too, and even when the languages involved are their <u>own mother tongues</u>!

However, we still have a very long way to go. We still do not realize that the need for bilingual education must not be viewed as merely a disease of the poor and the disadvantaged. We still do not realize that alternative curricular approaches to bilingual education make tacit assumptions and reach tacit decisions concerning the social roles of the languages (or language varieties) to be taught. We still do not realize that these assumptions and decisions can be empirically confirmed or disconfirmed by sociolinguistic data pertaining to the communities that our programs claim to serve. By and large, we still do not know how to collect the societal data we need for enlightened decision making in the field of bilingual education.

We are learning all of these things the hard way -- which may be the only way important lessons are learned in the world of public education --

but we are learning! Thank God for poor Mexican-American parents and their increasingly short tempers. Because of their number and their growing organization my grandchildren and yours have a chance of getting a bilingual public education in the United States without necessarily being either poor or even Hispanic.

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